AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An optical pickup device comprising:

a source of light ~~(1)~~;

a lens ~~(10, 11)~~ arranged on an optical path extending from said source of light ~~(1)~~ to a magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~;

a beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter arranged on an optical path extending from said source of light ~~(1)~~ to said lens ~~(10, 11)~~, to separate a portion of light reflected by said magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~;

a photodetector ~~(7, 27)~~ detecting said reflected light separated by said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter; and

a first diffraction element ~~(6, 26)~~ arranged on an optical path extending from said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter to said photodetector ~~(7, 27)~~, wherein:

said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter includes a first member ~~(15)~~ made of isotropic optical material, reflecting light received from said source of light ~~(1)~~ and directing the light to arrive at said magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~, and passing a reflection of light received from said magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~, and a second member ~~(14)~~ adjacent to said first member ~~(15)~~, made of anisotropic optical material and further passing light reflected from said magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~ past said first member ~~(15)~~;

said first diffraction element receives said light reflected from said magneto-optical recording medium past said first member and said second member;

said first member ~~(15)~~ is a prism having a parallelogramic cross section and having first parallel planes ~~(17, 18)~~ opposite each other and second parallel planes ~~(16, 19)~~ opposite each other and each traversing said first parallel planes ~~(17, 18)~~ at a predetermined angle, one of said first parallel planes ~~(18)~~ being arranged in contact with said second member ~~(14)~~, one of said second parallel planes ~~(16)~~ being arranged opposite said source of light ~~(1)~~,

the other of said second parallel planes ~~(19)~~ being arranged opposite said lens ~~(10, 11)~~;

said predetermined angle is so selected that light output from said source of light ~~(1)~~ and incident on said one second parallel plane ~~(16)~~ at a predetermined angle of incidence, is reflected initially by ~~said~~ an other first parallel plane ~~(17)~~ and then by said one first parallel plane ~~(18)~~ and emerges from said other second parallel plane ~~(19)~~;

said photodetector includes a set of photodetection portions ~~(7c, 7d)~~ corresponding to a portion thereof divided in two by a boundary parallel to a plane orthogonal to said first and second parallel planes ~~(17, 18, 16, 19)~~ of said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter;

said first diffraction element ~~(6, 26)~~ is divided in two by a line parallel to a plane orthogonal to said first and second parallel planes ~~(17,18,16, 19)~~ of said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter, to have first and second regions; and

light reflected by said magneto-optical recording medium ~~(12)~~ that is diffracted by said first region is directed to said boundary of said photodetection portions ~~(7c, 7d)~~.

2. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, wherein said first member~~(15)~~ has an index of refraction substantially equal to an extraordinary index of refraction of said second member ~~(14)~~.

3. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, wherein said first member ~~(15)~~ has an index of refraction having a difference from an extraordinary index of refraction of the second member ~~(14)~~ of no more than one half a difference between an ordinary index of refraction and said extraordinary index of refraction of said second member ~~(14)~~.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, wherein said second member ~~(14)~~ has a crystal axis selected to be orthogonal to light emerging from said other one of said second parallel planes ~~(16, 19)~~ and to form approximately 45° to a plane including a vector in a direction of the light emerging from said other one of said second parallel planes ~~(16, 19)~~ and a vector normal to said one of said first parallel planes ~~(17, 18)~~.

6. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, further comprising:

an optically transparent substrate ~~(4)~~ arranged between said source of light ~~(1)~~ and said photodetector ~~(7, 27)~~, and said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter; and

provided with said first diffraction element ~~(6, 26)~~ thereon.

7. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 6, further comprising:

a second diffraction element ~~(5, 25)~~ arranged in said optically transparent substrate ~~(4)~~ at a position to receive light output from said source of light ~~(1)~~, to divide the light received from said source of light ~~(1)~~ into at least three beams of light.

8. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 7, wherein said first and second diffraction elements ~~(6, 26, 5, 25)~~ are juxtaposed on a single plane.

9. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, further comprising:

a ½ wave plate ~~(3)~~ arranged between said source of light ~~(1)~~ and said beam ~~sputter (2)~~ splitter.

10. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, wherein said second member ~~(14)~~ has an index of refraction of 1.4 to 2.0.

11. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 10, wherein said second member ~~(14)~~ is formed of lithium tetraborate.

12. (currently amended) The optical pickup device of claim 1, wherein outputs of said photodetection portions ~~(7c, 7d)~~ are compared with each other to obtain a focus error signal.